

Case Number:	CM13-0018439		
Date Assigned:	04/02/2014	Date of Injury:	04/01/2013
Decision Date:	05/22/2014	UR Denial Date:	08/07/2013
Priority:	Standard	Application Received:	08/29/2013

HOW THE IMR FINAL DETERMINATION WAS MADE

MAXIMUS Federal Services sent the complete case file to an expert reviewer. He/she has no affiliation with the employer, employee, providers or the claims administrator. The expert reviewer is licensed in Acupuncture and is licensed to practice in California. He/she has been in active clinical practice for more than five years and is currently working at least 24 hours a week in active practice. The expert reviewer was selected based on his/her clinical experience, education, background, and expertise in the same or similar specialties that evaluate and/or treat the medical condition and disputed items/services. He/she is familiar with governing laws and regulations, including the strength of evidence hierarchy that applies to Independent Medical Review determinations.

CLINICAL CASE SUMMARY

The expert reviewer developed the following clinical case summary based on a review of the case file, including all medical records:

This is a 24 year old female patient with complaints of pain in the right foot-ankle. Diagnoses included sprain of the right foot and ankle. Previous treatments included: oral medication, physical therapy, use of a boot, self care and work modifications. A request for an acupuncture trial of 12 sessions was made because the patient continued to be symptomatic.

IMR ISSUES, DECISIONS AND RATIONALES

The Final Determination was based on decisions for the disputed items/services set forth below:

ACUPUNCTURE X 12: Upheld

Claims Administrator guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

MAXIMUS guideline: Decision based on MTUS Acupuncture Treatment Guidelines.

Decision rationale: The Acupuncture Medical Treatment Guidelines state that a trial of 3-6 sessions of acupuncture should be used to produce functional improvement. Based on the records reviewed, this patient has not yet undergone an acupuncture trial of 3-6 sessions. In this case, the provider initially requested 12 sessions, which is significantly more than the number recommended by the guidelines. The provider failed to document any extraordinary circumstances that would allow a variance from the guidelines. Therefore, the requested acupuncture sessions are not medically necessary at this time.

